

Surmounting Technical Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances: Exit of a Tyrant in Focus

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ABSTRACT

The work appraised the exit of a tyrant in surmounting technical challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances. "To accomplish the task of drawing a blue print for the exercise, the researcher adopted both primary and secondary sources of data collection to arrive at the dependable data needed for the research. Observation and experimentation were used for the primary source while textbooks, journals, short story and play script were used for the secondary source. From the research carried out, the conclusion arrived at is that if the Technical Director and his crew members are up and doing, the impending technical challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances are likely to be surmounted. The research outcome promises to be of immense significance to directors, technical crew, students, film and theatre practitioners as well as scholars interested in the business of adaptation. From the above, this paper recommends that in adapting short stories for stages performances, a professional Technical Director with the requisite skills, tools, materials, equipment as well as the efficient technical crew should be employed.

Keywords: *Surmounting, Technical, Challenges, Adaptation, Short Story, Performance*

INTRODUCTION

Literature refers to pieces of writing that are valued as works of art and drama, rose and poetry make up the different genres. In contemporary theatre practice where creative works of art abound in different genres, the business of adapting from other genres for stage performances becomes imminent. In the same vein, while adapting short stories for stage performances, the director and the technical crew should be conscious of the possibility of surmounting the impending technical challenges,

Literature is the mirror of life. It mirrors both the virtues and the vices within the society in which a writer domiciles. According to Jacob (2024), it is for the preservation of the cultural memories of the people". The three popular genres of literature are drama, prose and poetry. However, among the three genres, "drama and the novel (prose) are two of the most popular genres in the literary arts, and there exists a strong relationship between them" (Nda, 2011, Enang. 2018). According to Ola Rotimi (1988), every literature can be described as the scripted coinage of the mind of man. It is in this regard that a writer is most often referred to as the visioner and the seer. Jacob (2023a) further says that "it is imperative to acknowledge that there exists distinction between drama and theatre in the real sense of it, and a mere presence of performative elements within a society" (88). The writer or the producer of literature has often been called a creative writer, because he is the one who generates his own truths as prescribed by the powers of his imagination" (Onukaogu *et al.*, 2011), (Enang, 2023).

Based on the above assertion, Onukaogu (2008) further posits that "the ideal art is art that is functional... I think art is useless if it does not have any functional value. It has to have some utilitarian effects. It must be able to address certain issues. Speaking more succinctly on this subject matter, Onukaogu further expatiates:

An artiste is like a seer, prophet, the conscience of the society. He should be able to guide the society in certain directions. He should be able to identify those things that the ordinary mind cannot easily identify and then proffer solutions not necessary in the strict pedagogic way, but presenting the criticism through aesthetic means, in ways that will be informative, educative, enlightening as well as entertaining.... Art must be of value to the society (561).

It therefore implies that art, irrespective of the genre, must communicate and impact on its domiciliary society. Hence, communication is considered by Akamadu (2008) and Enang (2018), as the "epicenter of human society. It is the wheel on which all human activities revolve, without it, society will remain static or stagnant". Since communication is the hallmark of stage performances, the subject matter of adaptation from short stories to stage performances becomes invaluable.

Adaptation and Short Stories

The concept of adaptation is so significant to literary scholars such that a course entitled Adaptation and Story Dramatization has become part of the Curriculum for some of the students in this discipline. According to DiYanni (1998) "Adaptations go beyond translations, they alter literary works by bringing them into a different

medium". Adaptation in this context, therefore, has to do with the process of adjusting a particular genre of literature to suit a new purpose or circumstances. That is, producing another genre of literature through modification of the original. Hence, Geddes and Grossett (2003) expound that Adaptation has to do with a version of literally composition rewritten for a different medium. Therefore, such synonyms as: adjust, coordinate, conform, accommodate or temper can better go for adaptation in this context.

Furthermore, and based on this idea of adaptation presented above, it has been realised that "the short story was the principal weapon of the priest, the magician, and the stage. It has also been the undeniably effective art of all the important religious and political reformers" (Orie, 2010). Further expatiation on short stories clearly shows that they have been and are still seen as a veritable component of literary endeavour. Hence Orie asserts that:

the short fiction commonly called the short story is an elastic genre. This accounts for why it has been able to endure and/or contain the searing controversies generated around it, burning controversies that would have stifled it. It has survived both healthy and unhealthy skepticisms surrounding it, ranging from its true origin, character, practice, relevance, etc.... (129).

It is based on this premise that this article calls for the rejuvenation of the consciousness of adapting short stories for stage performances with *The Exit of a Tyrant* as the focus.

The Short Story: The Exit of a Tyrant

The office of the Boss, the venue of the meeting was well arranged for the handing over ceremony of the predecessor to the successor. The predecessor began the meeting as a Christian with a short prayer followed by his declaration of purpose in form of the Boss' opening remarks. The outgoing Boss in his opening remarks which equally served as the valedictory speech thanked all the members of the organisation for the co-operation he actually enjoyed from each and every one of them during his tenure in which, according to many was the brightest era in the history of the organisation.

As a piece of advice from the predecessor to the successor, the outgoing Boss delivered his piece of advice in form of a short wise saying which says "listen to many, but respond to a few". The former promised the later his unreserved co-

operation and his readiness to work with him anytime, anywhere and any day, so far as it is aimed at fostering love and unity towards the progress of the organisation. The in-coming Boss at that point had human and innocent face and smiled like a jackpot winner. He nodded his devilish head a million times and uttered a million thanks. At that point, we all thought that God has blessed us with a saint but little did we know that we were just joyously welcoming our doom, a tyrant was just assuming the throne.

In our usual performative characterisation, we acted out the change of baton. We clapped, sang and danced for the assumption of tyranny in the organisation. We ate and drank together and congratulated our new coming tyrant oblivious of the poisonous sting that coated his tongue. He, the new tyrant Boss expressed his gratefulness for being so honoured and promised to carry everybody along. The meeting ended with exchanged of pleasantries and messages of congratulations as we returned to our duty posts. The handle of a sword and the trigger of a gun have just been handed over to the self-acclaimed born again, but whose real character has just begun to manifest. Before the euphoria of the celebration could settle, a notice of emergency meeting entered our pigeon holes just the same day he was sworn in, junior staff not exempted.

On the day of the meeting the following day, the hidden 'tyrantic' personality emerged from its hidden garment and dangled before us. His posture, countenance and utterances drastically and automatically changed as he handed down his draconian bye-laws. As the meeting was just beginning, a very senior staff that had become a Boss seven (7) years before our unfortunate Boss wanted to take excuse and go out to take his drugs in his office and return to the meeting, but our tyrant objected, exploded and turned down the request. He rained all kinds of abuses on his senior and concluded with his favourite verse "I'm now the head, the chief security officer and the chief accounting officer of this organization. This is my turn and I must reign and succeed. If anybody stands on my way, I pull him down."

At the end of the meeting, we all left with rhetorical questions in our minds some which include..., what kind of a leader is this? How do we bear and survive this throughout his era? These questions and many more kept on rummaging in us while we wondered and pondered.

As we were strutting out of his office with heavy laden hearts, the second category of staff that terrifically waited in the general office filed in with heavy faces. It was not quite ten minutes before his tyranic voice of abuses was heard in the air..... "I am saying everybody must arrive here on or before 7:00 o' clock and you must not leave here to anywhere before 5:00PM. If I need you to work overtime, no nonsense objection would be tolerated. That is my last command. I am the new Boss, this is my era." At that point, one of the staff ventured to sum up courage and asked, 'sorry sir, please sir at two or three o'clock, we will go for school runs. The new Boss rattled and thundered, 'what nonsense do you mean by 'school runs'? And the staff said, "sir, to pick our children from school". The Boss thundered again, 'sha-r-ra-p. Are you mad in the head to tell me that trash? Anybody that dares me will certainly get it hot from me. Seven (7)a.m. is Seven (7)a.m. Now you may use that door (pointing at the door) and get out of my office. They apprehensively walked out, all faces down, and hands back completely immersed in thought.... the thought of the unknown.

Our new Boss immediately swung into action. He carefully packaged and rebranded his gift of dishonour. He mindfully and tactically dished and sumptuously served generous shares to all staff of the organisation irrespective of rank and status, always with a reminder that he was the head and the Chief Officer. As a result, virtually all the staff started looking outside either for transfer of service or redeployment. Our Boss never wanted advice from anybody except his wife who unofficially became the Assistant Boss. She virtually took all the organisation decisions. It went to an extent that if there was something to be done in the office and the wife was not there for advice; he would pause in between conversations and said "let me ask my wife".

It came to pass that the organisation was expecting important visitors, so the Boss was advanced some reasonable sum of money for both minor and major repairs in the organisation. Attached were strict instructions that the boss should ensure that he carried everybody along, the instructions added that he should delegate responsibilities accompanied with the corresponding amount to the staff of the organisation for efficiency and proper accountability, but the wife would not let him do such a thing. Rather, the wife became the Chief Purchasing Officer of the organisation even in the areas she knew nothing about. On the whole, the new Boss

developed a strange and draconian leadership style that made the working place to be extremely uncomfortable for every staff. His sanity level became questionable, but the more the people complained and wailed, the more he brought out new harsh measures to victimise, humiliate and puncture people's skeletal and emaciating joy. As the saying goes, "six days are for the thief, but one day for the owner of the farm".

In the same vein, the new Boss in his usual manner bathe one of his staff with his venomous gift of dishonour, this time even before the eyes of more than five hundred members of the audience that were in the auditorium for a show. The Boss was so generous this time around such that the recipient, was so loaded with the gift of dishonour that getting up from his seat became so difficult that he glued to the seat for an unforgettable moment. When the recipient of the generous gift of dishonour regained consciousness from the generous dosage of the gift, he struggled with his feet and strutted to the office of the new Boss and also struggled with his strength and breath until he managed to conquer and said, 'thank you for your abundance gift of dishonour and God bless,' and he walked out of the office.

The shock made the recipient to forget where he parked his car. He did not even remember to enter his office to put things right before closing for the day. All he could do was to ponder and wonder about in search of his car. When he could recognise his car, he entered, ignited the car and with a single swing, accelerated the car straight to his house. On getting to the house, he alighted from the car and entered his bed room, prayed and was able to sleep off after struggling to overcome his emotions.

The last and the most painful dose of the gift of dishonour were meted out on Saturday at about 4.30 p.m. After Sunday, on a Monday morning, the Boss strode with his Assistant through the passage toward the office, but as they entered the general office in his usual tyranic mood and posture, behold a messenger from the management was waiting for him with a letter in his hands. Thinking that it was another invitation for cash collection, immediately ushered the messenger to the office, signed the dispatch notebook, collected the letter and hurriedly opened to consume the contents.

On opening the envelop, the Boss the tyrant, to his least expectation but greatest bewilderment saw a letter directing him to vacate the seat of the Boss with immediate effect as another person has already been appointed to take over from him on the spot. His hands trembled, the letter dropped from his hands and the Assistant hurriedly picked and read. When she also read the contents of disengagement letter, she also knew that as an unofficial assistant, she has also lost

the grasp of the seat and its accompaniments. She dropped the letter on a sofa near the window. Moved close to the husband, held him on the shoulder, looked at him straight to the eyes and a stream of tears ran freely down the four eyes of the two tyranic heads.

The news of the Exit of the Tyrant soon spread like wild fire, everybody that heard the news did not have much to say but to thank God for removing their burden and taking away their sorrows. In unison and appreciation to God for his quick and timely response, the recipient of the gift of dishonour simply said hurray, farewell to tyranny, the tyrant is gone; this is The Exit of a Tyrant.

Adapting the Exit of a Tyrant for Stage Performance

Act One, Scene, One

The scene opens in the office of the Boss, the venue of the meeting, the office is well arranged and decorated, the Boss sits as a presiding officer while other members of staff sit around.

Boss: You are all welcome to this meeting. Before we continue, somebody should lead us with a short prayer.

Dr. Mfon: (*gets up, arranges himself and says*) let us pray, our heavenly father, we have come again to discuss issues that will lead to the development of our organisation. Please take absolute control of all the deliberations in Jesus name I pray, Amen.

All: (chorus) Amen

Boss: Thank you for those short, but inspiring prayers. This meeting is not going to be a very long one as you all have already known the issues at hand, I want to thank you all for your unreserved cooperation during my tenure and at the same time implore you to extend same to my successor. To you my successor, I will like to first of all congratulate you for your well-deserved appointment. As my piece of advice to you, please listen to many, but respond to few as appropriate. Don't step on people's toes so that others will not step on yours. Respect your colleagues so that they will also respect you, as respect, they say is reciprocal. I hope my successor has something to say in response.

New Boss: (*Humbly and innocently. Rises and takes a boto with a smile before beginning to speak*). My dear colleagues, I thank you all for this respect you have

done me. But I want to thank most supremely the Almighty God for his favour and grace in my life (*He nods several times as an agama lizard*) I just want to thank you a million times, thank you, thank you and thank you again.

All: (*General laughter and joy engulf the office as all the members of staff erroneously believe that a saint has arrived unknown to them that a tyrant has just assumed the throne*).

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: (*Brings out a melodious song of joy with a sonorous voice and others join*).

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: He has done for us

All: He has done for us 2x

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: What our father cannot do

All: He has done for us

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: What our mother cannot do

All: He has done for us

(The song continues for about 5 minutes amidst dances. After the song and dance, the change of leadership baton is dramatized and acted out, but that marks the assumption of tyranny in the organisation. Everybody cats and drinks congratulating the tyrant oblivious of the poisonous venom that his tongue is coated. The New Boss assumes duty, adjusts his sword and balances his trigger. Before the settlement of the euphoria, the tyrant begins to enlist his act revealing his real character which was hitherto concealed in his born- again garment. Lights fade and scene one ends).

Scene Two

(In the office of the new Boss, he takes a comfortable position and calls at the Messenger).

New Boss: (*Calls the Messenger*) Asanga, Asanga, Asanga (*Now with a loud and thunderous voice*) Asanga....

Mr. Asanga: Yes Oga, I de come o-o.

New Boss: What are you doing that has blocked your ears from hearing my calls or are you deaf? Come right inside here you big fool.

Mr. Asanga: Oga, see me here.

New Boss: You are stupid, Idiot. Come on disappear from my sight and call the secretary for me now. I say disappear, big fool.

(The messenger is dumbfounded. Stands frozen out of surprise and tries to actually ascertain if it was real or dream).

Mr. Asanga: Oga, are you....

New Boss: I say get out you buffoon.

Mr. Asanga: *(Quietly walks away with his hands in front and his head down in heavy thought)* Hmm, see what education has done to me. If I had gone to school and got my degree, this man would not have insulted me this way. *(He walks out to the general office and calls the secretary)*

The Secretary: Ah! Mr. Asanga, why are you so gloomy? Is anything the matter?

Mr. Asanga: Yes, something is the matter. Your New Boss is the matter. Any way, he wants to see you.

Secretary: See me?

Mr. Asanga: Yes, see you

Secretary: Alright, let me go and see him *(Walks from the general office to the office of the New Boss)* HOD, learnt you want to see me.

New Boss: Is it now you heard? Are you the only frustrated woman in the world? Please get out and issue notice of emergency meeting to all staff.

Secretary: Ah ah my Boss. Why are you talking to me like that Sir? **New Boss:** I say get out and do what you have been commanded to do and stop complaining, after all I am the head here, this is my time. *(The secretary walks away with heavy thought. Lights fade and Scene Two ends).*

Scene Three

The day of the Emergency General Meeting. The New Boss sits majestically but furiously awaiting the arrival of members of staff.

New Boss: *(Clears his throat)* Eem!! You are all welcome to this meeting. It is going to be very brief. It is going to be a brief one as I do not have much time to

spend with you people. The most important point is that I have my laws and they include:

- (1) No late coming to work
- (2) No absenteeism
- (3) No abscondment
- (4) No idle moment
- (5) No trading and
- (6) No external contact without my knowledge.

Prof Akananwan: (*Surprised*) Excuse me HOD, you are too harsh on us. What is the matter today? Are we no longer a family?

New Boss: Family or no family, I am now the head and I have my laws that must be obeyed.

Prof. Ifiok: Excuse me my Boss, sorry, mine is just to take permission from you and go to take my drugs.

New Boss: Please Prof, sit down. Nobody moves out of this office as I am talking. After all, when you were the head, I obeyed you, so I don't want any sign of insubordination, stubbornness or disobedience during my reign. I am now the head, the chief security and accounting officer of this organization. So I must be obeyed, period. This is my turn and I must succeed but if anyone stands on my way to success, I must surely push him down and crush him or her to nothing. You can now go to your duty posts.

(At the end of the meeting, everybody leaves disappointed. People gather in small groups to ponder and ask how they can survive and tolerate him throughout his tenure, as they are discussing in small groups, lights fade and Scene Three ends).

Scene Four

A messenger is seen carrying a letter and a dispatched notebook as he walks into the lobby leading to the general office of the organisation where the office of the Boss is domiciled.

2nd Messenger: (*Knocks on the door*). Is there anybody here?

Secretary: Yes, come on in.

2nd Messenger: (*Enters and walks to the Secretary*) Madam, I have a letter for your Ogar, sign here and collect.

Secretary: Okay (*She signs the dispatched notebook*) give me the letter.

2nd Messenger: Here is it Ma.

Secretary: Thank you. (Opens the letter and reads. She nods, smiles and moves towards the office of the Boss. Knocks on the door and enters). Good afternoon Sir.

The Boss: (*Looks up slowly and sternly at the Secretary*). Yes, what is your problem?

You did not have ears to hear that nobody should disturb me today?

Secretary: Sorry Sir, you have a very important letter here.

The Boss: Give it to me and get out immediately.

Secretary: Thank you Sir.

The Boss: (*Reads the letter, laughs and picks up the phone and calls his wife*) Hello Honey, Hahahaha. I told them I am the Head and the Boss. This is my time. Thank God the money has been approved. Eighty Million Naira (N80,000,000.00) approved for the renovation of the organisation? This is God's doing. Come to the office immediately (*drops the phone*). Let me even read their letter again. (*Picks the letter and reads carefully. Drops the letter and looks straight to the audience*). They say I should make sure that I carry everybody along? They must be joking. They want this people to know the amount that is approved so that they will invest my office and infect me with their poverty? (*He thinks for a while and reacts*) Nowhere, nowhere, I say nowhere. As far as this position that I am occupying now is concerned, my wife is my brother, my sister, my assistant, my counselor, my adviser, I mean, my everything, my all and all. She will soon be here (*Picks his cell phone and calls her again*). Honey, darling, my love, how are you? My precious. What is delaying you?

Wife: Yes my sugar. How is the office today?

The Boss: The office is fine. My precious honey, I cannot wait for you to arrive. Guess what?

Wife: Precious honey, what do you want me to guess? Any problem?

The Boss: There is no problem; rather, there is good news for you. Do you remember that letter I wrote applying for money to carry out total rehabilitation and renovation of the organisation?

Wife: Yes, I remember, my dear.

The Boss: The approval has come. Eighty Million Naira (80,000,000.00) has been approved and the letter is on my table, right before me now.

Wife: *(Screams with joy)*. Hahaha...

The Boss: Can you meet me in the office right away?

Wife: Honey precious, I am already there. *(Screams joyfully and drops the call)*.

The Boss: *(Laughs loud, picks the letter and stairs at it amidst the laughter. The wife is seen walking and running along the lobby to the office of the Boss. Without knocking on the door, rushes in. With open arms and joyous screaming collapses into the waiting arms of the Boss. They hold themselves tight for a long time before the Boss can talk)*.

The Boss: My precious Honey, please sit down and help me read the letter.

Wife: Thank you precious sugar. *(Takes the letter from the Boss and reads)*.

The Boss: Do you see the last paragraph?

Wife: That you should carry everybody in the organisation along?

The Boss: Yes, can you imagine that?

Wife: Honey, do not mind them. I am here for you and with you. What can they do that I cannot do?

The Boss: Please ask me o oo. Do not mind them. The money is now ours, so we can do anything that we wish.

Wife: That is true my love.

The Boss: My Precious Honey, let us go home immediately and draw the plan of how we are going to use the money for the organisation and for ourselves. *(They continue to laugh, pack things into the bag, walk out of the office and lights fade)*.

Scene Five

In the conference hall of the organisation, all the staff members are sited expecting the Boss and members of the Board of Directors. As the Boss and members of his entourage enter, all the already waited staff members stand in respect. They walk in and take their places.

The Boss: *(With gesture)*. You may be sited. *(He remains standing and continues with his speech)* Good afternoon everybody. Today is a very significant day in the annals of this organisation. You can see the personalities that have entered this hall to have a discussion with you. Before we continue, I will like to invite Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit to lead us in short opening prayers.

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: Let us pray. Our dear Father, who art in Heaven, the Lord of Lords and King of kings. The omniscience and Omnipotent God, the Prime Mover, we give thanks and glory for all that you have done for us, individually and collectively as an organisation. We say, hallowed be your name. Father Lord, we pray that you forgive all our sins and bless us abundantly in Jesus dear name.

All: Amen.

Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: Father Lord, this is another significant day in the history of this organisation, Father, we pray that you take absolute control of all the issues that we are going to deliberate on. Thank you, Father, because we know that you have answered our prayers in Jesus name we have prayed.

All: Amen.

The Boss: Thank you so much for that wonderful exploration of the spiritual realm. Without wasting time, I wish to present my brief opening remarks. On this note, I wish to remind you that our esteemed Board of Directors has deemed it fit to have this interactive session with you. I mean, with all of us today in order to assess the progress of our organisation so far. It is a truism that some of you may know all the members of Board of Directors here sited, while some of you do not, most especially some of you that came into the organisation not so long ago. For this reason and as a matter of protocol, it becomes pertinent to have a brief introduction. From my immediate right, we have Professor Andy Ekpun, the leader of the team.

Prof. Andy Ekpun: Good afternoon all.

All: Good afternoon Sir.

The Boss: Sited next to him is Otuekong (Prof.) Ubong Obong.

Otuekong Ubong Obong: I greet you all.

All: We greet you Sir.

The Boss: As we all know, our organisation is gender friendly. So, in our midst, we have a woman of timbre and calibre and she is no other person than Alhaja (Prof.) Amina Suleiman.

Prof. Amina: Tor, good afternoon my people.

All: Good afternoon Alhaja.

The Boss: By my left, we have another woman of integrity, and she is Prof. (Mrs.) Kahinde Olawatonyi.

Prof. Kahinde: Beini, I greet everybody.

All: Prof., we greet you too.

The Boss: The last but not the least is a technocrat of international repute and he is Mazi Obi Okonkwo.

Mazi Obi Okonkwo: Good afternoon my people.

All: Good afternoon Sir.

The Boss: Thank you so much. As I said earlier, today is a significant day in the history of our organisation as the presence of these noble men and women will surely have a great and positive impact in our lives individually and collectively. These are the members of our Board of Directors and I will call on the leader of the team to clear the air by speaking to us. Prof. Andy, over to you.

Prof. Andy: Thank you very much. I wish to profusely thank God Almighty for journey mercies. I also wish to appreciate you all for making out time to be here for us to look into the prospects and challenges within our beloved organisation. Since the new Head was appointed for you in this branch of our organisation, this is the first time that we have come as the Board of Directors to exchange ideas in a cross pollination methodology. So, do us well to tell us your minds and at the same time make suggestions with regard to the way forward and sustainable development of our organisation. Amongst other issues, we are going to look at the leadership style, attitude to work, new strategy for industrial harmony and higher productivity. Let us start with the leadership style, the Head and staff members relations. Recently, we approved and disbursed the sum of Eighty Million Naira. (N80,000,000.00) only for a total turnaround of the organisation for higher productivity. Though we will get the documented retirement records from your Head, it is still imperative that we verbally interact today on the subject. Before we go into the issue proper, we want to know if the Head carried everyone alone in the process of executing the project as so

directed in the letter of approval. Did he? (*General murmuring and restiveness amongst the staff members*).

The Boss: Silence! Silence!! I say silence!!!

Prof. Andy: Allow them. They are all adult, so they know what they are doing and saying. Alright my comrades, murmuring and chorus answers will not help. If you have something to say, can you please indicate by lifting up of your hands? (*There are many hands up and the Boss is getting confused and restive*).

Prof. Andy: (*Looks into the audience and quickly identifies Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit*) Okay, Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit, you prayed for us to commence the session, what do you have to tell us? Dr. (Mrs.) Inemesit: With due respect to the Board of Directors and the Head, I have to be objective before God and man, the Head sited there with you did not carry me long. I do not know whether he carried others.

Voices from the Audience: He did not, He did not. He only worked with his wife and all the members of his family. He did not even tell us about the approval of the money.

Prof. Andy: No, I said that I do not want chorus answer. If you have something to say, just raise your hands and we will give you opportunities to speak.

(*There are many hands up again. Prof. Andy looks around and identifies one elderly Prof.*)

Prof. Akananwan: With due respect to the high table and all protocols duly observed. My name is Professor Akanawan. I am one of the most senior staff in this organisation in general and this branch in particular and I wish to speak my mind objectively that the Head sited there did not carry anybody along, not even me. I rest my case.

(*There is thunderous applause and hailing from the audience thus: Prof!, Prof!!, Prof!!!, Prof!!!!.....*).

The Boss: (*More confused and restless*) Silence, I say silence everybody (*Ranting this time around*). I-s-a-y-s-i-l-e-n-c-e....

Prof. Andy: (*Calmly*). No, no, no. You do not have to shout at adults like that. Let them say their minds. Yes, who else wants to say something? (*Many hands again*).

Prof. Andy: Alright, you my young man (*Pointing at one young man in the audience*).

Dr. Uforo Edikan: My name is Dr. Uforo Edikan and by my observation, I am the youngest in age and rank in this hall but, I have to say what I have so far witnessed and observed in this organisation under the rulership of The Boss sited there. Since our Boss came into power, this branch of our organisation has known no peace. It has always been one form of abuse or the other, one form of insult or the other, one form of ranting or the other and....

The Boss: *(So furious and aggressive, unable to control himself any longer).* Enough is enough. Who gave this rat the right to insult me? When were you even employed in this organisation? What do you know? What is your rank? Who is your father and who is your mother that you have the effrontery to speak when elders are speaking? Just keep quiet and sit down. In short, I know how I am going to deal with you, after this meeting, your queries will be uncountable. Idiot of your caliber, you, you, you, *(stammering)* you, you, ...

Prof. Andy: *(Calmly ones again)* No, No, No, it has not reached that level. The staff members are merely expressing their feelings about your leadership style so, you do not have to extend your abuses to their parents. This is official relationship and it should be handled same.

The Boss: No my Chairman. I cannot sit down here to see this kind of insubordination even from this small rat. I cannot *(He hits the table with his fist)* I say I-can-not and I mean what I am saying and ...

Prof. Ukpong Owo: That is enough.

Prof. Amina: I am pleading with everybody to take it easy.

Prof. Kehinde: The Chairman, with due respect Sir, we have seen and heard enough, so, I suggest that we end the meeting at this point and take the report to the Management. That is my position.

Prof. Andy: Alright, my dear colleagues in the Board of Directors, what is our unanimous decision?

Board of Directors: We are in support of Prof. Kehinde. We should take the report to the Management.

Prof. Andy: Alright. Let us call for closing prayers. Mazi Obi, give us short closing prayers.

Mazi Obi: Thank you Father for what you have done for us today. Take us safely to our different destinations. Thank you for hearing our prayers.

All: Amen. (*People exeunt in different directions, lights fade and the scene ends*).

Scene Six

It is another new day and there are movements here and there. The Boss is seen coming in with his wife to the office. They enter and settle before the Boss calls the messenger with the usual insolent approach.

The Boss: Mr. Asanga, Asanga, A-sa-n-ga

Mr. Asanga! Yes Sir, I'm coming Sir (*Runs immediately to the office of the Boss*).
Oga see me here.

The Boss: Are you deaf, where were you when I called?

Mr. Asanga: Oga, I been dey answer you but you no been hear.

The Boss: You are calling me a deaf? Get out from here and call the Secretary for me now you Buffoon.

Mr. Asanga: (*Just looks at the Boss, shakes his head and walks away soliloquizing. Enters the Secretary's office*). That man has started again oh. He says, he wants to see you.

Secretary: Okay, let me go and see him.

Mr. Asanga: Don't forget the letter oh.

Secretary: Yes, that is what I am taking to him. (*He goes out with the letter to the Boss*).

Secretary: Good morning Sir.

The Boss: Good morning. How is the office?

Secretary: The office is fine. You have a letter Sir.

The Boss: From where?

Secretary: From the Management Sir. Here is it Sir.

The Boss: Give it to me and go back to your office immediately.

Secretary: Okay Sir (*She leaves and the Boss reads the letter in a hurry thinking that it was another financial approval. As he is reading, his mouth and eyes become wide open and his hands shaking. The wife stares at him with surprise and ask*).

Wife: Honey, what is it?

The Boss: *(No reply but only stretches his hand to give the letter to the wife. The wife collects and reads while the Boss begins to sob. The wife reads through the letter. It is a letter of change of Head. The Boss has been removed from the Headship. The wife looks at the husband, the Boss. Both sob bitterly. Get up slowly and hold each other tight. They cannot control their tears any longer. They therefore sob bitterly, loudly and uncontrollably until lights fade and the play ends).*

Surmounting Technical Challenges of Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances

Every stage performance has its peculiar technical challenges and so also is the adapted version of short stories for stage performances. By technical challenges in this context, this paper refers to the difficulties likely to be encountered by different designers of the theatre in the process of consciously and meticulously applying the requisite technical aids to stage performances in furtherance of the improvement of the quality of performances presented on stage before live audiences. In this vein, Jacob (2023b) opines that “Technical theatre has come to be reckoned with as the essential bedrock in the development of Theatre Arts profession without which the quality of theatre production, wherever the setting, would have still been at rather crude stage of development”.

Based on the above, it becomes imperative to expound that these technical challenges imbedded in the requisite technical aids revolve around the different recognisable areas of technical theatre practice which are:

1. Scene Design
2. Lighting Design
3. Sound Design
4. Costume Design
5. Makeup Design

The above-mentioned areas of Technical Theatre practice are discussed below in respect of surmounting technical challenges of adapting short stories for stage performances

Surmounting Scene Design Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances

Scene design is a very important area when considering how to surmount the technical challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances, because

according to Jacob (2023c), “scene design is the hub around which all other aspects of theatrical productions revolve”. While adapting short stories for stage performances, "you will have started to imagine its physical life in terms of people, locations, atmosphere and any other visual demands made explicitly or implicitly by the author" (Caird, 2010). It is at this point of fully digesting the needs of the adapted play's physical life and imagining how it might be realised, in theatrical terms that a scene designer is chosen and entrusted entirely with the visual world of the play. To surmount the challenges of realising the physical play, the director has to choose a scene designer with whom he/she can work together in furtherance of the development of the visual ideas of the play. (Caird 2010) avers that "some directors have a close relationship with a particular designer with whom they habitually work". Caird (2010) and Enang (2020) further posited that:

Whether you employ your designer after a great deal of prior thought, or develop all your design ideas in partnership with your designer, you will discover that there are countless different ways of designing any one play, that there are no absolute rules governing the appropriateness of any set of design ideas.

It implies that to surmount the scene design challenges while adapting short stories for stage performances, the director must be ready to work with his/her designer to realise the visual ideas of the adapted play because the short story version is bereft of this. In respect of this therefore, the designer is expected to first of all accept the choice of script, carryout a thorough script analysis and interpretation based on his scene design ideas, embark on series of research activities to discover the period and setting of the play in which he/she is designing for, make some sketches and drawings in terms of scene-by-scene division, ground plan, elevation and a model to guide him or her in the process of unfolding his creative imagination in the process of surmounting the impending challenges of designing scene/set for an adapted version of a play from short stories. This model is also to serve as a guide to the director, the actors as well as other designers in the process of executing their assigned tasks. By doing so, it is obvious that the scene design challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances can be surmounted.

Surmounting Lighting Design Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances

After scene design consideration, the next salient area to be considered is the lighting design challenges in the process of adapting short story for stage performances. This is so because most of the short stories that the plays are adapted

from lack any information in respect of the required lighting equipment, the lighting positions and angles, the lighting colours, the lighting cues and many others. It is quite obvious that good lighting makes the performance while poor lighting mars it. Expatriating on how to surmount lighting design challenges for an adapted play, Enang (2020) collaborates Caird's (2010) explanations that:

The lighting designer is one of your most important artistic collaborators, and you must choose your man or woman with great care-care for a happy collaboration and for the technical and artistic demands for the works. As a matter of courtesy and common sense, it is advisable to choose your Lighting Designer only after you have chosen your Set Designer.... Good Lighting Designers are concerned not only with the lights, but with the whole production. They are there to help tell the story - with their technique certainly, but also with their intelligence, analysis and wit. The best Lighting Designers thoroughly read and understand the play, study the design in great detail, watch rehearsals like hawks, and engage with the actors as well as with the director and the other designers (364).

It implies that to surmount the lighting design challenges in adapting short stories for stage performance, the Lighting Designer should be chosen after the Scene Designer has been chosen. Enang (2018) establishes that both the designers and all other technical crew members should be able to work collaboratively because most of the design ideas are to come as a result of the contributive efforts of the designers. Above all, the Lighting Designer, in an effort to surmount the lighting design challenges for adapted play should be able to imaginatively sketch and draw salient paper works like the scene by scene division, the lighting plot, lighting legend, lighting cues and others paper works to serve as guide in the process of executing his/her assigned tasks.

Surmounting Sound Design Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performance

All stage performances require one form of sound or the other. In the process of designing sounds for stage performance adapted from short stories therefore, the sound designer should do all within his/her disposal to surmount the impending challenges. Based on this postulation, Parker, Wolf and Block (2009) opine that:

The use of sound and music in theatre is not new; its origins go back to primitive rituals that combined dramatic action with music and dance. However, sound as a separate theatrical design element on a

par with scenery, costume, and lighting is a fairly recent development. Not so many years ago, theatre sound was primarily made up of mechanical effects supervised by the properties department, and sound requiring electricity, such as bell and buzzers, were relegated to the lighting and electrics department.

The Scholars further assert that "with the advent of high-fidelity recording and playback equipment in the 1960s, sound reproduction became a practical tool for the theatre".

In surmounting Sound Design challenges in the process of adapting short stories for stage performances therefore, the Sound Designer must work in close "collaboration with the Director to determine the placement of the sound equipment" (Parker *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, he or she must be experienced and skillful because he or she is likely to perform a good number of technical tasks such as:

1. Read, interpret and analyse the adapted script based on sound and special sound effects requirements.
2. From the script analysis and interpretation above, the Sound Designer determines and decides the required sound and sound effects needed for the different scenes of the production or the adapted play.
3. After determining the requisite sound and sound effects, the Sound Designer decides on the materials, tools and equipment needed for the actualisation of the required sounds and effects.
4. From the above knowledge coupled with the knowledge of the venue for the performance, he or she determines the equipment placement and positioning to avoid reverberation.
5. He or she proceeds to draw the scene by scene division as well as the sound cues taking into consideration the amplitude, the harmonics, and timbre of sound and sound effects to be reproduced for the adapted play. According to Taylor and Strickland (2005), "on your sound cue sheet, indicate the cue number, the script page on which it occurs, the sound, the equipment and counter numbers, the beginning and the ending cues, whether the sound should fade in or out, and at what levels the sound should start and end.
6. The designer must attend all the production meetings and rehearsals. This is necessary because the success of any theatrical performances revolves around collaborative efforts of all the theatrical personnel. To buttress the above assertion, Parker, Wolf and Block (2009) opine that:

The best design in the theatre is a result of good collaboration. The production Sound Designer must be involved in the collaborative process from the start. This is when the style of production is

determined, a factor that will heavily influence sound decisions; this is when the scene designer can be made aware of special sound needs such as speaker placement; and this is when creative ideas can be shared with the director and other designers.... (282).

With the above explanation, it is glaring that sound design challenges inherent in adapting short stories for stage performances can be surmounted through imaginative and creative application of design ideas and elements.

Surmounting Costumes Design Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances

For short stories to be successfully adapted for stage performances, Costumes Designer has a major role to play for the impending challenges to be surmounted. In this regard, Taylor and Strickland (2005) postulate that "like the Set Designer, the Costume Designer works closely with the director to create a plan for costume". For success to be achieved in this direction, the Costumes Designer has to perform the following tasks among others:

1. To surmount costumes design challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances, Taylor and Strickland (2005) aver that the Costume Designer should analyse the script first". This implies that textual analysis and interpretation is essential in this process.
2. From the stage of script analysis, the Costumes Designer should carry out series of researches to ascertain the kind of costumes he or she is to make in order to surmount the challenges. In his opinion, Caird (2010) opines that:
A Costume Designer has many hurdles to jump from the blank drawing table to the populated stage. The costumes must be researched and imagined before they can be drawn. The drawing must be characterful, evocative, accurately coloured and textured and be appealing to director and actors, who will want to discuss them, negotiate over them, and suggest alterations to them. (173)

This speaks volume in favour of research as one of the stages or hurdles in which a Costume Designer has to surmount while designing for stage performances adapted from short stories.

3. To surmount the challenges of designing costumes for adapted stage performances, a Costume Designer has to make comments and sketches as he/she reads through the adapted script. Taylor and Strickland (2005) assert that "after the production design concept is firm, research the era and create sketches and colour renderings from which the costume crew can make, or

build individual costumes. These sketches are also important to guide you in modifying stock costumes". The sketches and comments are therefore important guide to a Costume Designer in surmounting the costume design challenges for adapted plays.

4. In an effort to surmount the challenges of designing costumes for adapted plays from short stories, Enang (2023) opines that "a Costume Designer has to make what is referred to as Costume Plot". Taylor and Strickland (2005) opine that:

To keep track of the costume items for each character, develop a costume plot. List each character and each scene in the play in which the character appears. Then itemise each costume piece the character wears for each appearance. If the character changes costumes within a scene, note that as well. (235)

Costume plot is therefore a significant component in surmounting costume design challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances.

5. A Costume Designer must also take into consideration what is professionally referred to as Costume List which has to do with the organisation of the Costume Designer's thought which is always done with the help of the costume plot. A costume list should be made for each character. This should include a comprehensive list of all the clothing and accessories of a particular character in a play. This costume list helps the designer to create the required costumes with ease.

With the above discussed tasks, a Costume Designer is sure to surmount the costume design challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances. Furthermore, these same measures can also be used in surmounting costume design challenges in other similar stage performances.

Surmounting Makeup Design Challenges in Adapting Short Stories for Stage Performances

Makeup is considered as one of the most important and rewarding dramatic experiences especially when designing for an adapted stage performances from short stories. Law (2011) opines that "Makeup has been widely used in the theatre since the decline of the Mask". Taylor and Strickland (2005) also explain that more than any other technical element, makeup determines the way in which the audience perceives characters. It can turn teenagers into old people, pleasant-looking people into grotesques, and humans into animals, goblins, and other fantasy creatures.

In order to surmount the technical challenges of designing makeup for stage performances adapted from short stories, the Makeup Designer has to follow almost the same steps presented above for costume design (Enang 2023). This means that he or she has to first of all analyse and interpret the script, carryout researches, make comments and sketches, attend meetings and rehearsals as well as collaborate with other designers in furtherance of surmounting the impending challenges of designing makeup for adapted stage performance. Being an adapted performance, the Makeup Designer has a major role to play. In this respect, Gillette (1997) strongly affirms that:

It is the responsibility of the makeup designer to create a design that will help transform the actor into the character. In order to accomplish this goal, the Makeup Designer must understand what the character should look like. In addition to looking at the costume sketches and analyzing the script for information about the appearance of the character, the makeup designer uses additional information to help determine the physical appearance of character.

It is glaring that a makeup designer is a very important personnel in theatre practice and has a vital role to play in the process of surmounting the technical challenges of adapting short stories for stage performances.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above, it is important to conclude that from a short story, a full length stage performance can be adapted. The above presentation also shows that if well plan and organised, the impending technical challenges in adapting short stories for stage performances can be surmounted with the utilisation of skilled technical director and sophisticated technical equipment. For the literary scholars and students, adaptation should be seen as an interesting exercise and a fertile ground where rich and interesting stage performances can be derived. In the light of this, the conclusion here is that there should be synergy or collaboration among theatre personnel in particular and literary scholars in general in furtherance of generating more quality stage performances from diverse sources, adaptation being one of them.

Sequel to the above discovery, it becomes pertinent to recommend that courses on theories and principles of adaptation should be taught at all levels of university education within Arts and Humanities disciplines. While adapting, the adapter should be at liberty to think out the dialogue for the different fictitious characters created for the stage performances. Furthermore, since adaptation goes

beyond a mere translation and involves altering literary works by bringing them into a different medium, the person that is out to adapt should be well vested with the principles and theories of script writing. The exercise of adapting short stories for stage performances are aimed at communicating specific information to the members of the audience, so, stage directions are necessary and they must be inserted where applicable and appropriate to aid holistic comprehension of the adapted script. Short stories are specifically meant for reading while stage performances are meant to be acted out by live performers before a live audience. Therefore, adaptation calls for adequate knowledge of stage geography, responsible application of colours and synergism in technical aids for appreciable interpretation, characterisation and pictorialisation. Finally, from the above, it is recommended that to achieve the expected success in adapting short stories for stage performances, professional technical director with competent crew members should be employed.

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